

HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY

September 10, 1945

Dr. John Scudder  
The Presbyterian Hospital  
622 W. 168th Street  
New York 32, New York

Dear John,

I got your note concerning the American College. Many thanks for your letter of recommendation.

During the past three years we have seen twelve of the sixteen active regions of the College, sounding their attitude on the admission of negroes; and last year in a conference with Dr. Collier, Chairman of the recently revamped Committee on Admissions, I offered my services as a guinea pig when and if a test of the College was to be made.

My first complaint against the College, of course, is, and has been, its bigotry; but probably a larger complaint would be that its admission requirements are too ill-defined and its standards too low for any institution which pretends to be representative of the best of American surgery. My contact with both the Canadians and the British has made it manifestly clear that they consider the American College of Surgeons to some degree a social organization whose scholastic and professional requirements, therefore, are purely secondary.

In my discussions with Dr. Collier I suggested that there should be some sort of examination; as a matter of fact, my own feeling is that the American College would enhance its own status by accepting only candidates who have successfully passed Specialty Certifying Boards in Surgery and then have practiced that specialty with distinction, or at least satisfactorily, for a period of from three to five years.

We have attempted to stay out of the recent discussions concerning the admission of negroes originating in New York City because we did not feel that we could honestly go to bat for the men who were bringing the pressure for admission. There are, however, dozens of very capable, well-trained negro surgeons who can easily meet all requirements and who would be an honor to any organization. I hope that they will apply and are accepted.

Dr. John Scudder

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I hope that the difficulty which floored you on your trip back from China has all cleared up by this time and that you are going full-blast again.

I had hoped to get up there before the summer was over just to keep the feel of the place, but things have gone on so rapidly that it has not been possible. One class graduated last Friday, and another will enter the last of this month so that there has been very little respite.

Give my best to D. V. and Mary. Lenore says hello to everybody.

Again, many thanks. Best good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

CRD:GW